

2007 – Continuing to Serve the Community

The Mt. Vernon-Black Township Parks and Recreation Department continued providing a variety of recreational programs for Mt. Vernon. The Department personnel consisted of Director – John Tate, Recreation Manager – Adam Jines, Pool/Community Center Director – Ruth Fulwider, Maintenance Supervisor – Darin Toler and Administrative Assistant – Debra Scott. The department also employed several part-time and seasonal employees throughout the year.

The Parks Director reported to the Parks Board every third Wednesday of each month. The agenda for these meetings consisted of old business from previous meetings and any new business or issues to be addressed. The 2007 Parks Board Members were Ron Bennett (President), Linc Baro, Kay Cox, John Robb and Synda Waters. Kelly Cox was appointed to serve on the Board by Mayor Knowles in August, due to the untimely death of John Robb.

The department continued to maintain five public parks in Mt. Vernon. The parks are Brittlebank Park, Fairview Park, Kimball Park, Kiwanis Park and Sherburne Park. The department also maintained the Community Center and Parks Office, Brittlebank Pool and Kiwanis Senior Citizen Center.

Highlights from 2007

The year of 2007 saw some highs and lows for the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Linc Baro was appointed to the Parks Board by Mayor Knowles, Mr. Baro has served on the board several times in the past. In late May, Parks Board member John Robb passed away. We were thankful to have had Mr. Robb serve on the Parks Board. Mr. Kelly Cox was appointed by Mayor Knowles to fill the vacancy on the Parks Board.

In the area of youth and adult sports, we were able to add a few new programs in 2007. These included an Intro to T-ball program for preschool age youth, Adult Sand Volleyball and an expanded youth football program. In 2007 we saw around 1000 youth participate in our sports programs. (A break down of each program is attached.) The Parks Department took over the Cub Football program after the parent run organization disbanded in 2007. This brought an additional 66 youth under the Parks and Rec. programs. To help offset the cost of Cub Football, the department applied for and received an NFL Youth Football Grant for \$2500. This allowed us to update and replace existing equipment. We had 54 adult teams participate in 2007. This would include over 700 adults. (A break down of each league is attached.)

The Community Center still continued to serve the youth of the community in 2007. We saw an average of 100-150 youth come through the doors each week. The Community Center hosted 37 private skating parties in 2007. The Community Center held a Spring Break Luau with activities each day leading up to a DJ Dance and Pizza Party on Friday night. Over 100 youth attended the dance. The Community Center hosted the annual Back to School Party, Pumpkin Festival and Christmas Party. We also had 20 youth participate in the Floor Hockey League.

The summer of 2007 brought another busy season to Brittlebank Pool. Before the pool opened in May, Tri-State Painting was hired to paint and complete repairs to the pool. These repairs made a big impact in the water loss of Brittlebank Pool over the past few years. The pool operated using only a small percentage of water compared to previous seasons. The paint job and repairs made opening on time a challenge, but the pool staff met the challenge and opened the pool on time. The total revenue for 2007 was up 11% from 2006. (A breakdown of revenues is attached). There were 40 family passes and 12 single passes sold in 2007. 155 children participated in swim lessons at Brittlebank. We also hosted 31 private pool parties. Over 75 youth participated on the Brittlebank Barracuda swim team. The Parks Dept. also held the first ever Float-In Movie Night with over 100 in attendance.

In 2007 we continued to look for new ways to provide recreational opportunities and increase the awareness of outdoor recreation. In late May, we hosted the 1st Annual All-American Kids Fishing Derby at Brittlebank pond. We had 30 kids participate in the derby and gave away prizes to all that attended. In 2007, the department also applied for a "Take Me Fishing" grant sponsored by the NRPA. Our department was one of 100 communities in the country to receive this \$1000 grant. The grant was created to increase fishing and boating awareness. We used the grant to continue the Outdoor Adventure Program we started in 2006. We took a group of at risk middle school age kids fishing and boating for five days. They were taught fishing and boating techniques and safety awareness by Denny Hargett. We look to continue this program in the future.

2008 – A New Year with Change

As the year 2008 begins, we will continue to offer the programs of the past and hope to start up some new programs during the year. We will continue to provide safe and clean parks and seek out ways to improve our facilities. After receiving a partial grant for \$3800 from the Posey County Community Foundation in 2007, we will be installing additional playground equipment in the spring of 2008. As our facilities continue to age, we look towards the future in securing funds to replace and update these aging facilities. Our first step is to establish a Cumulative Capital Fund for the Parks Department. To date the Parks Department has no such capital fund established. With many updates needed, it will be vital that a Capital Plan be implemented. It is our pleasure to serve the community and we look forward to 2008.

Respectfully,

John D. Tate
Parks Director